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SENT DEPARTMENT 1161, REPEATED INFORMATION BERLIN 327, LONDON 238, PARIS 336, MOSCOW 135, USAFE 238, USAEUR 274

PARIS PASS USRO, USCINCEUR, THURSTON AND WEST

NOFORN

DURING TWO DAY VISIT TO BERLIN I TALKED WITH MANY GERMAN POLITICAL LEADERS, AMERICAN MILITARY AND CIVILIAN OFFICIALS AND JOURNALISTS.

A FEW IMPRESSIONS ARE CLEAR:

1. AS LONG AS ALLIED GARRISONS, ESPECIALLY UNITED STATES, REMAIN IN WEST BERLIN, THE MORALE OF ITS CITIZENS WILL BE AT LEAST MODERATELY SATISFACTORY, ON THE ASSUMPTION THE PRESENCE OF SUCH GARRISONS MEANS THAT UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE READY TO GO TO WAR WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN ORDER TO DEFEND ITS RIGHTS IN BERLIN.

2. AT PRESENT THE FACTOR MOST ADVERSELY AFFECTING MORALE IS THE FEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES MIGHT BE PREPARED TO DEAL AT SOME LEVEL, EVEN THOUGH IT MIGHT BE ON MINOR POINTS, WITH GDR OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES. THIS SENTIMENT IS EXPRESSED MOST IMMEDIATELY IN CONNECTION WITH THE POSSIBLE TURNOVER OF CHECK POINT CONTROLS BY THE SOVIETS TO THE GDR. AN ACCEPTANCE BY THE ALLIES OF AN AGENCY OR OTHER RELATIONSHIP IN THIS RESPECT WOULD BE ALMOST UNANIMOUSLY CONDEMNED. IN spite of the SIX MONTH WAITING PERIOD SPECIFIED IN THE SOVIET NOTE, THERE ARE SOME BERLINERS WHO BELIEVE SOVIETS MAY SOON TAKE US WITH CHECK POINT CONTROLS DELEGATED TO GDR PERSONNEL. SUGGEST SPEEDY

REVISION

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-2- 1161, DECEMBER 2, 7 PM FROM BONN

REVISION EXISTING TRIPARTITE AGREEMENT TO CONFORM TO RECOMMENDATIONS USBER 400 TO DEPARTMENT BE MADE, AND FAVORABLE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT DECISION THEREON BE PRESSED FOR ADOPTION BY OUR ALLIES. UNTIL THIS IS DONE, I FEAR LEAK OF CURRENT INSTRUCTIONS MAY OCCUR, AND CONSEQUENCES WOULD BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS AND CERTAINLY SHATTERING TO OUR PRESTIGE.

3. ALTHOUGH GENERALLY BELIEVING AN ATTACK UPON OUR GARRISON WOULD RESULT IN UNITED STATES-SOVIET WAR, THERE IS DOUBT WHETHER WE WOULD USE FORCE IF REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN ACCESS TO BERLIN. AGAIN OPINION IS ALMOST UNANIMOUS WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO FIGHT FOR PRESERVATION ACCESS RIGHTS, AND SOVIETS AND EAST GERMANS SHOULD BE CONVINCED SUCH IS OUR DETERMINATION.

SCEPTICISM OVER OUR ABILITY MILITARILY TO FORCE OUR WAY THROUGH BY TRAIN OR AUTOBAHN IS WIDELY PREVALENT. HOWEVER, EVEN IF SUCH SCEPTICISM PROVED JUSTIFIED, BERLINERS FEEL STRONGLY WE SHOULD NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO ASSERT OUR RIGHT TO RESUME INTERRUPTED TRAFFIC AND OUR INTENTION TO DO SO BY FORCE, IF THE OCCASION WARRANTS.

AS TO ACCESS BY AIR, THERE IS CONFIDENCE IN OUR ABILITY TO MAINTAIN OUR ACCESS, PROVIDED WE INTEND, AND ORDERS ARE ISSUED, TO PROTECT THIS TRAFFIC BY APPROPRIATE FORCE EVEN AT RISK OF WAR. PLEASE REFER TO EMBTEL 1334, OCTOBER 27, 1957, WRITTEN FOR SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES BUT IN PRINCIPLE APPLICABLE.

4. MANY SEE IN SOVIET NOTE OPPORTUNITY FOR WEST TO TAKE HARD LINE IN REFUSING BERLIN PROPOSALS WHILE MAKING COUNTER-PROPOSITIONS THAT WOULD BRING UNDER DISCUSSION PROBLEMS AFFECTING WHOLE OF GERMANY.

I TALKED ONLY TO ONE GERMAN JOURNALIST, PUBLISHER AXEL SPRINGER. HE HAS RECENTLY BEEN STOUT IN DEMANDING FIRM STAND BY BERLINERS AND ALLIES AGAINST TURNOVER TO GDR, IS IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH MAYOR BRANDT, AND AFTER LONG LAPSE AGAIN RECEIVED BY CHANCELLOR. HE CONFIRMED, IN THE EXPRESSION OF HIS OWN VIEWS, THE REACTIONS I HAVE BEFORE REFERRED TO.

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